

Re: Mr. McCarthy, Eugene
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Senator Wants a Look Into CIA

Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy, D-Minn., one of the more progressive and astute younger members of the federal upper chamber, has announced that he will ask the Senate next session to create a select committee to investigate the Central Intelligence Agency.

The Senate may not receive that suggestion with enthusiasm. Congress has heretofore ignored McCarthy's repeated proposal for a joint congressional committee to keep a closer check on the CIA. But, with its constitutional responsibility for advising and consenting on foreign policy, the Senate should undertake to keep itself better informed on what the CIA is doing.

At present the CIA reports only and directly to the White House. Its appropriations are so hidden in the budget that it is unaccountable to Congress for its spending. The only congressional check is a cursory twice-a-year review by an informal group of senior members of the Senate and House Armed Services

and Appropriations Committee.

That may be necessary and proper so long as the CIA sticks to its statutory evaluating intelligence data. But the evidence is strong that the CIA has gone far afield of that, into undercover and paramilitary activities that substantially affect, even formulate, U.S. foreign policy.

The disturbing continuing question is whether the CIA's activities tend to commit this nation to foreign policy courses which Congress does not condone. The Senate inquiry would have to be discreet, fully respecting considerations both of national security and executive prerogatives in the sensitive foreign-policy field, but that could be assured and an objective review of the CIA function is overdue. The least that the Senate should do is to assure itself that the White House is fully cognizant of, and in complete control of CIA activities in the field that affect foreign policy.